AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) In a computer system, a method for collectively performing validation of credential information of one or more product distributors associated with one or more product distribution transactions, the method comprising:

obtaining a set of available credential information of each of the <u>one or more product</u> distributors <u>associated with the one or more product distribution transactions</u>;

storing the set of credential information in the computer system, wherein the credential information is stored in a form that can be processed by the computer system;

loading from at least one data source a set of credential validation rule data;

obtaining <u>the</u> one or more product distribution transactions associated with <u>the</u> one or more <u>product</u> distributors; and

processing in the computer system the one or more product distribution transactions and the credential validation rule data to validate the obtained credential information of each of the <u>one or more product</u> distributors associated with each of the product distribution transactions in accordance with predetermined validation criteria and to determine whether the validated credential information meets eligibility requirements for compensation associated with each of the obtained product distribution transactions <u>for the one or more product distributors</u>.

2. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein said obtaining said set of available credential information further comprises denormalizing data from a plurality of database tables.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said loading from at least one data source said set of credential validation rule data further comprises loading said set of rule data from a standard format data file.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein said loading said set of rule data from standard format data file further comprises parsing data from a file having an Extensible Markup Language (XML) format.

1   5.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 1 wherein processing in the

2 computer system the rule data further comprises:

3   determining a set of rules associated with said collective group by using a set of

4   preconditions to filter among a plurality of rules, said rule data comprising at least

5   one test having an associated type;

6   partitioning said set of rules based on said type of said at least one test associated with

7   said set of rules;

8   preparing said collective group wherein said collective group comprises tests associated

9   with said test type; and

10   determining for said set of rule data whether said at least one test associated with said set

11   of rules are valid.

1   6.   (Currently Amended) The method in claim 1 ~~wherein said step of executing a~~

2 ~~predetermined action~~ further ~~comprises~~ comprising:

3   computing compensation for each ~~distributor~~ of the one or more product distributors

4   having validated credential information that meets the eligibility requirements for

5   compensation associated with each of the sales transactions.

1   7.   (Canceled)

1   8.   (Canceled)

1   9.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 1 further comprising:

2   obtaining the set of available credential information for at least one of the distributors

3   from two or more tables;

4   denormalizing said set of available credential information from said two or more tables

5   into a denormalized database table;

6   wherein the rule data comprises a set of test conditions data from at least one data source;

7   and

8   processing in the computer system the rule data comprises applying a credential test by

9   querying said denormalized table with said set of test conditions data.

1   10.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 1 wherein said obtaining a set
2   of available credential information further comprises using database connections.

1   11.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 9 wherein said denormalizing said set of
2   credential information further comprises creating one or more database tables.

1   12.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 9 wherein said denormalizing said set of
2   credential information further comprises joining at least two database tables into at least one
3   database table.

1   13.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 1 further comprising:
2   obtaining the rule data from a data file.

1   14.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 3 wherein said data file further
2   comprises a data file having an Extensible Markup Language (XML) format.

1   15.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 9 further comprising:
2   defining the rule data.

1   16.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 15 further comprising storing said rule data
2   into a database table.

1   17.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 9 wherein said applying a credential test
2   further comprises joining said set of test conditions data with said denormalized database table.

1   18.   (Withdrawn)   In a computer system, a method for collectively performing
2   validation of credential information of one or more product distributors associated with one or
3   more product distribution transactions, the method comprising:
4   receiving product distribution transaction data derived from the one or more product
5   distribution transactions;

6   if the product distribution transaction data is unusable by the computer system to validate

7   the credential information, converting the product distribution transaction data

8   into a form usable by a rule engine;

9   determining a set of one or more distributors associated with the received product

10   distribution transaction data;

11   obtaining credential information that relates to each member of the set of distributors

12   associated with one or more of the product distribution transactions;

13   storing the set of credential information in the computer system, wherein the credential

14   information is stored in a form that can be processed by the computer system;

15   loading rule information utilizable to determine if each member of the set of distributors

16   is properly credentialed to receive compensation related to the received product

17   distribution transaction data;

18   executing a rule engine to process the rule information and credential information to

19   determine which, if any, of the one or more members of the set of distributors are

20   properly credentialed to receive compensation related to the product distribution

21   transaction data; and

22   determining compensation for each member of the set of distributors that is properly

23   credentialed to receive compensation related to the product distribution

24   transaction data.

1   19.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 18 wherein converting product distribution

2 transaction data into transaction input data usable by a rule engine comprises loading said

3 product distribution transaction data into at least one data source.

1   20.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 18 wherein the product distribution

2 transaction data further comprises data having an Extensible markup language (XML) format.

1   21.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 18 wherein loading rule information further

2 comprises loading said rule information from at least one data source having an Extensible

3 markup language (XML) format.

22. (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 18 wherein said credential information is stored in multiple database tables, the method further comprising:

denormalizing said credential information stored in the database tables; and

joining at least two of the database tables into one database table.

23. (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 18 wherein said credential information is stored in multiple database tables, said rule information comprises test rules, and executing a rule engine to process the rule information and credential information further comprises joining at least two database tables containing said set of test rules and said credential information.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 18 wherein said loading of said rule information further comprises loading said rule information from a standard format data file.

26. (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 18 wherein said determining whether said credential information of said at least one sales representative conforms to said regulatory constraints executing a rule engine to process the rule information and credential information further comprising comprises:

determining a rule set associated with said credential information using a set of preconditions to filter among a plurality of rules, said rule data comprising at least one test having an associated type;

partitioning said set of rules based on said type of said at least one test associated with said set of rules;

preparing said collective group wherein said collective group comprises tests associated with said test type; and

determining for said set of rule data whether said at least one test associated with said set of rules are valid.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein product distribution transactions comprise data related to sales of a product.

1   28.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6 wherein compensation comprises a
2   commission.

1   29.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein <u>the one or more</u> product
2   distributors comprise one or more members of the group consisting of sales agents, sales
3   representatives, supervisors of the sales agents, and supervisors of the sales representatives.

1   30.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein:
2   the rule data comprises credential information identifying regulatory constraints for each
3   of the obtained sales transactions placed on at least one of the <u>one or more</u>
4   distributors associated with said obtained sales transaction; and
5   processing in the computer system the rule data to validate the obtained credential
6   information comprises determining if said credential information obtained sales
7   transactions placed on at least one of the <u>one or more</u> distributors conforms to said
8   regulatory constraints.

1   31.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein predetermined validation
2   criteria comprises at least one member of the group ~~comprising~~ <u>consisting of</u>:
3   required educational credits;
4   required licenses;
5   required level of liability coverage;
6   license renewal requirements;
7   background check; and
8   residency rules.

1   32.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 processing in the computer system
2   the rule data further comprises processing the rule data for multiple product distribution
3   transactions comprises batch processing the rule data for multiple product distribution
4   transactions for batches of product distribution transactions.

1   33.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 wherein the set of preconditions

2   comprises at least one member of the group comprising:

3   a product class precondition;

4   a jurisdiction precondition; and

5   an end date precondition.

1   34.   (Withdrawn) A computer system comprising:

2   a processor;

3   a memory coupled to the processor, the memory having code executable by the process

4   stored therein to:

5   obtain a set of available credential information of one or more product distributors

6   associated with one or more product distribution transactions;

7   store the set of credential information in the computer system, wherein the

8   credential information is stored in a form that can be processed by the

9   computer system;

10   load from at least one data source a set of credential validation rule data;

11   obtain one or more product distribution transactions associated with one or more

12   distributors; and

13   process in the computer system the rule data to validate the obtained credential

14   information of each of the distributors associated with each of the product

15   distribution transactions in accordance with predetermined validation

16   criteria and to determine whether the validated credential information

17   meets eligibility requirements for compensation associated with each of

18   the obtained product distribution transactions.

1   35.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 34 wherein the code to obtain a set

2   of available credential information of one or more product distributors associated with one or

3   more product distribution transactions further comprises code to denormalize data from a

4   plurality of database tables.

1   36.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 34 wherein the code to load from at

2 least one data source a set of credential validation rule data further comprises code to load said

3 set of rule data from a standard format data file.

1   37.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 36 wherein the code to load said set

2 of rule data from a standard format data file further comprises code to parse data from a file

3 having an Extensible Markup Language (XML) format.

1   38.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 36 wherein said data file further

2 comprises a data file having an Extensible Markup Language (XML) format.

1   39.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 34 wherein the code to process in

2 the computer system the rule data further comprises code to:

3   determine a set of rules associated with said collective group by using a set of

4   preconditions to filter among a plurality of rules, said rule data comprising at least

5   one test having an associated type;

6   partition said set of rules based on said type of said at least one test associated with said

7   set of rules;

8   prepare said collective group wherein said collective group comprises tests associated

9   with said test type; and

10   determine for said set of rule data whether said at least one test associated with said set of

11   rules are valid.

1   40.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 34 further comprising code to:

2   compute compensation for each distributor having validated credential information that

3   meets the eligibility requirements for compensation associated with each of the

4   sales transactions.

1   41.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 34 further comprising code to:

2   obtain the set of available credential information for at least one of the distributors from

3   two or more tables;

4   denormalize said set of available credential information from said two or more tables into

5   a denormalized database table;

6   wherein the rule data comprises a set of test conditions data from at least one data source;

7   and

8   process the rule data comprises applying a credential test by querying said denormalized

9   table with said set of test conditions data.

1   42.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 41 wherein the code to denormalize

2 said set of credential information further comprises code to create one or more database tables.

1   43.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 41 wherein the code to denormalize

2 said set of credential information further comprises code to join at least two database tables into

3 at least one database table.

1   44.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 41 further comprising code to:

2   facilitate defining the rule data.

1   45.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 41 wherein said code to apply a

2 credential test further comprises code to join said set of test conditions data with said

3 denormalized database table.

1   46.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 44 further comprising code to store

2 said rule data into a database table.

1   47.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 34 wherein said code to obtain a set

2 of available credential information further comprises code to use database connections.

1   48.   (Withdrawn)   The computer system of claim 34 further comprising code to:

2   obtain the rule data from a data file.

49.   (Withdrawn) An article of manufacture comprising processor executable code to:

obtain a set of available credential information of one or more product distributors
associated with one or more product distribution transactions;

store the set of credential information in the computer system, wherein the credential
information is stored in a form that can be processed by the computer system;

load from at least one data source a set of credential validation rule data;

obtain one or more product distribution transactions associated with one or more
distributors; and

process in the computer system the rule data to validate the obtained credential
information of each of the distributors associated with each of the product
distribution transactions in accordance with predetermined validation criteria and
to determine whether the validated credential information meets eligibility
requirements for compensation associated with each of the obtained product
distribution transactions.

50.   (Withdrawn) An apparatus to collectively performing validation of credential
information of product distributors associated with a product distribution transaction, the
apparatus comprising:

means for obtaining a set of available credential information of each of the distributors;

means for storing the set of credential information in the computer system, wherein the
credential information is stored in a form that can be processed by the computer
system;

means for loading from at least one data source a set of credential validation rule data;

means for obtaining one or more product distribution transactions associated with one or
more distributors; and

means for processing in the computer system the rule data to validate the obtained
credential information of each of the distributors associated with each of the
product distribution transactions in accordance with predetermined validation
criteria and to determine whether the validated credential information meets

15   eligibility requirements for compensation associated with each of the obtained
16   product distribution transactions.

1   51.   (Withdrawn) An apparatus to collectively performing validation of credential

2 information of one or more product distributors associated with one or more product distribution

3 transactions, the apparatus comprising:

4   means for receiving product distribution transaction data derived from the one or more

5   product distribution transactions;

6   means for converting the product distribution transaction data into a form usable by a rule

7   engine if the product distribution transaction data is unusable by the computer

8   system to validate the credential information;

9   means for determining a set of one or more distributors associated with the received

10   product distribution transaction data;

11   means for obtaining credential information that relates to each member of the set of

12   distributors associated with one or more of the product distribution transactions;

13   means for storing the set of credential information in the computer system, wherein the

14   credential information is stored in a form that can be processed by the computer

15   system;

16   means for loading rule information utilizable to determine if each member of the set of

17   distributors is properly credentialed to receive compensation related to the

18   received product distribution transaction data;

19   means for executing a rule engine to process the rule information and credential

20   information to determine which, if any, of the one or more members of the set of

21   distributors are properly credentialed to receive compensation related to the

22   product distribution transaction data; and

23   means for determining compensation for each member of the set of distributors that is

24   properly credentialed to receive compensation related to the product distribution

25   transaction data.